

151 - CENTENNIAL

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18 July 1975

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[redacted] The following is for what its worth, and in no way is meant to detract from any efforts of the existing Bicentennial Committee in the Agency.

The other day, [redacted] and I were discussing the enthusiastic feedback on the General's appearance before the SAR national convention, and recognizing the value of the "carry-home" reactions to the General's talk by some admittedly significant community leaders.

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The conversation came around to our "bag" (recalling that [redacted] is the vice chairman of the [redacted] Bicentennial Commission and I chair the [redacted] Commission). We exchanged some ideas on how the Agency might derive significant p.r. benefit by fulfilling a role in the national Bicentennial celebration, using the opportunity to emphasize the traditional role of "American intelligence," dating much from the intelligence activities of those men who created our fundamental documents. One such opportunity for which Agency participation might derive benefit, ~~etc.~~ we noted, would be in compiling --without much difficulty thanks to published DAR records--an "honor role" of American intelligence officers (spys if you will) during the American Revolution, perhaps publishing it. Frankly, we felt, the "bed-rock" groups which pride themselves on descent from Revolutionary War forebears, would not turn their backs on the patriots who by their efforts "founded" our heritage of intelligence work. Rather, we felt, they would propagandize, favorably, the role of those men. We even drifted into some type of thought of recognition to states or communities, i.e. plaques with the names of their sons who served in American intelligence during the Revolutionary War. (we weren't smoking anything but cigarettes, I assure you.) Anyway, we saw quite a few opportunities by which the Agency would benefit from going "Bicentennial," using the celebration and the spirit it inspires as a rationale (excuse?) for going "public" in a truly unclassified but logical surfacing of those early intelligence officers. We even thought of the public speaking advantages to presenting plaques, honor rolls in printed form, etc. (We present only certificates of recognition to our local Bicentennial projects, and they accept them as if they were gold.)

But, to the point. Should you think the General would like to hear our thoughts on exploiting the Bicentennial, we would be glad to have a few minutes to unload. Again, to convey our own thoughts, and not to reflect in any way on the work of the Agency's existing Bicentennial Commission.

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